

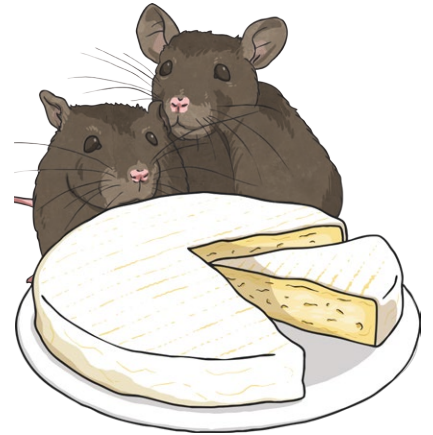
Improving Your Reading with Rex Retriever: The Rats of Franchville



Newtown, or Franchville, as it was called in days of old, is a sleepy little town upon the Solent shore. Sleepy as it is now, it was once noisy enough. What made the noise? Rats. The place was so infested with them that it was scarcely worth living in.

There wasn't a barn, a storeroom or a cupboard that rats hadn't eaten their way into. There was not a wheel of cheese that they had not gnawed hollow, nor a bag of sugar they hadn't emptied. Even the wooden barrels of mead and beer were not safe from them; they'd gnaw a hole in the rim and lower themselves down while holding on to another rat's tail.

However, eating produce was not their worst trait. Between the squeaking and shrieking and the hurrying and scurrying, you could neither hear yourself speak nor get a wink of good honest sleep. Not to mention that mothers across the town had to keep watch over their baby's cradle all night long to prevent a big ugly rat from running across the poor little fellow's face and doing who knows what mischief.



1. What were residents of Newtown unable to do? Tick **two**.

- stand guard
- sleep and rest
- hear themselves speak
- leave the town

2. Give one historic name for the town of Newtown.

3. Give three reasons why residents of Newtown despised the rats. .

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. Tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

Statement	True	False
Rats lowered themselves into barrels of oil.		
Mothers stayed up all night long to protect their babies.		
The rats would hollow out loaves of bread.		
Residents could not abide the shrieks and squeaks.		



Answers

1. What were residents of Newtown unable to do? Tick **two**.

- stand guard
 sleep and rest
 hear themselves speak
 leave the town

2. Give one historic name for the town of Newtown.

Franchville

3. Give three reasons why residents of Newtown despised the rats

Accept any three of the following: they had eaten their way into every barn, store-room and cupboard; they had gnawed every wheel of cheese hollow; they had emptied every bag of sugar; they had entered the barrels of mead and beer; they had eaten produce; they squeaked and shrieked/hurried and scurried so loudly that no one could sleep; they would run across babies' faces.

4. Tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

Statement	True	False
Rats lowered themselves into barrels of oil.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mothers stayed up all night long to protect their babies.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
The rats would hollow out loaves of bread.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Residents could not abide the shrieks and squeaks.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	